

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

The heading at line 11 of page 2 has been amended as follows:

Disclosure Summary of the Invention

Paragraph beginning at line 12 of page 2 has been amended as follows:

An object of the present invention is to provide a retractable-nib writing tool capable, when the writing body is retracted, of securely sealing the writing nib at the tip by the combination of the sealing lid and the sealing tube and thereby preventing the writing body from drying.

A retractable-nib writing tool according to the invention has a retractable writing body in a shaft tube and has a sealing lid and a sealing tube which seal the writing nib of the writing body in association with the forward and backward movements of ~~that~~ the writing body, wherein the sealing lid and a guide tube fixed to the writing body are linked by a plurality of thin line portions, the sealing lid and thin line portions are formed integrally, and the sealing lid is opened and closed relative to the sealing tube by the forward and backward movements of ~~these~~ the thin line portions.

Paragraph beginning at line 13 of page 3 has been amended as follows:

In the retractable-nib writing tool, it is possible to loosely insert into the guide tube at least one thin line portion out of the plurality of thin line portions which are advanced by the forward motion of the guide tube and provide engaging means to engage with ~~that~~ the guide tube.

Paragraph beginning at line 22 of page 3 has been amended as follows:

Also, in the retractable-nib writing tool, it is desirable ~~for~~ that at least either one of the sealing lid and the sealing tube is composed of a material whose water vapor transmissivity prescribed under ASTM F 1249 is not more than 3.0 (g. mm/m².day) under the condition of 37.8°C (90% RH).

The heading at line 20 of page 7 has been amended as follows:

~~Best Mode for Carrying Out~~ Detailed Description of the
Invention

Paragraph beginning at line 22 of page 7 has been amended as follows:

A first preferred embodiment of the present invention will be described with reference to Fig. 1 through Fig. 10. Fig. 1 is a partial longitudinal section showing a state in which a writing body 2 is retracted, ~~i.e.~~ i.e., a state in which a sealing lid 4 is sealed. A sealing tube 3 urged forward by a springy or resilient member 7 is set in the forward part within a tubular member or shaft tube 1, and the sealing tube 3 is prevented from coming off the shaft tube 1 by the engagement of its forward end with a stepped portion 1n, but the sealing tube 3 may as well be formed integrally with the inner face of the shaft tube 1. Inner ribs 3a for keeping sealed closure with the forward outer wall of the writing body 2 are formed on the rear inner face of the sealing tube 3 as shown in Fig. 7. Whereas three flexible elongate members in the form of thin line portions 51, 52 and 53 are formed radially from the sealing lid 4 and at equal intervals (120-degree intervals) in a unitary structure in this embodiment (see Figs. 4 and 5), they need not be limited to this number but should preferably be disposed in equally spaced positions, and may as well be formed as separate units.

Paragraph beginning at line 13 of page 8 has been amended as follows:

~~Whereas the~~ The surfaces of the flexible elongate members or thin line portions 51, 52 and 53 are coated with a lubricant, but ~~it~~ the lubricant may as well be mixed and kneaded together with the resin simultaneously with their molding. Satisfactory examples of the lubricant include silicone oil, wax, talc and grease, but a fluid material such as silicone oil is preferable in respect of the coating case. While the rear ends of the thin line portions 52 and 53 are fixed to a guide tube 6 as shown in Fig. 4 and Fig. 10, the thin line portion 51 is slidably fitted to the guide tube 6. ~~And the~~ The springy member 7 is ~~stretched~~ resiliently compressed between the guide tube 6 and the sealing tube 3 as shown in Fig. 1 so that the sealing lid 4 is pressed backward by an urging force of the springy member 7 to keep the sealed closure between ~~that~~ the sealing lid 4 and the sealing tube 3. The sealed closure between the sealing lid 4 and the sealing tube 3 may be direct closure between the sealing lid 4 and the sealing tube 3 as in this embodiment, but it may as well be closure formed via a soft member. Similarly, the sealed closure between the inner face of the sealing tube 3 and the forward part of the writing body 2 may also be accomplished by a ring-shaped soft member, for instance an O-ring consisting of rubber or resin. Further the linking portions between the rear ends of the thin line portions 52 and 53 and the guide

tube 6 constitute arciform wide bases 6a. By making the bases 6a wider than the rest of the thin line portions, deterioration or cutting of those parts which might otherwise occur from repeated bending is prevented (see Fig. 5 and Fig. 6).

Paragraph beginning at line 1 of page 10 has been amended as follows:

The thin line portions 51, 52 and 53 are in part provided with a plurality of contracted diameter portions 51a, 52a and 53a in a regular way as shown in Fig. 4. Advancing of the writing body 2 and of the guide tube 6 fixed to the writing body 2 causes the contracted diameter portions 51a, 52a and 53a to be readily bent and deformed within the shaft tube 1. In Fig. 4, a bulged or enlarged portion 51b is provided on the thin line portion 51, and the bulged portion 51b restricts the advancing of the thin line portion 51 along with the advancing movement of the guide tube 6 by engaging with engaging step portions 3e protruding from an outer side face of the sealing tube 3 (i.e. obstruction of the advancing movement by a contracted or reduced diameter portion 3d between the engaging step portions 3e). Although the thin line portion 51 is therefore restricted, the two other thin line portions 52 and 53 advance, and therefore the sealing lid

4 rotates around the vicinity of the tip of the thin line portion 51, and the sealing lid 4 is expanded and opened to make writing possible (see Fig. 9).

Paragraph beginning at line 20 of page 10 has been amended as follows:

The sealing force for sealed closure of the writing nib of the writing body 2 should preferably be 50 to 100 kPa as determined by a method of measuring sealing force to be described afterwards, and more preferably to be 60 to 80 kPa in particular. There are two sealed positions which will require this sealing force including, as shown in Fig. 7, the sealed portion between the sealing tube 3 and the sealing lid 4, and the sealed portion between the inner ribs 3a formed on the inner wall behind the sealing tube 3 and the writing body 2. The sealing force required in these sealed positions is as described above; if the sealed force is less than 50 kPa, the ink solvent will permeate and volatilize from the sealed positions, eventually resulting in a problem that the written line becomes faint and blurred when the durability is considered. If the sealed force surpasses 100 kPa, as the load on the springy member 7 will then have to be increased, there will arise a problem that the thin line portions 51, 52 and 53 urging the sealing lid 4 by pressing backward with the

springy member 7 break down on the way or ~~extend~~ stretch over time or a problem that the force required for a knocking operation to protrude or retract the writing body 2 will increase to make the operation more difficult. Therefore, by keeping the sealing force within the above-described range, the sealed state of the writing nib 10 of the writing body 2 is kept satisfactory, making the retractable-nib writing tool to let protrusion and retraction be easily accomplished while securely preventing drying.

Paragraph beginning at line 17 of page 14 has been amended as follows:

Further, from the rear end 1c of the guide groove 1a, a restricting groove 1i is formed in the circumferential direction as shown in Fig. 8. When the tool is shipped out of the factory or is not in use, inadvertent projection or retraction is prevented by turning the sliding piece 9 in the circumferential direction of the shaft tube 1 and positioning a base 9b in the restricting groove 1i. Also, in order not to let the sliding piece 9 (the base 9b) be easily returned on this occasion, the sliding piece 9 and the shaft tube 1 can engage with each other. More specifically, a projection 9h disposed on the under face of the sliding piece 9 engages with a projection 1k (see Fig. 3) disposed on the outer

circumferential face of the shaft tube 1. ~~To add, though~~
Though the base 9b (the sliding piece 9) and the knocking member 2b are formed of separate members to be engaged with and fixed to each other in this embodiment, they may as well be integrally formed by means of injection molding or cutting.

Paragraph beginning at line 24 of page 16 has been amended as follows:

Further, whereas the ink absorbent consisting of a fiber bundle is inserted within the writing body portion 2a and the knocking member 2b linked by the airtight structure, it may as well be formed of a porous material such as sponge, urethane or cotton. And whereas a coat consisting of a thin filmy material is wound around the ink absorbent, consisting of the fiber bundle, a plurality of through holes may be formed in ~~that~~ the coat.

Paragraph beginning at line 2 of page 18 has been amended as follows:

A second preferred embodiment of the invention is shown in Fig. 12 through Fig. 15. The plurality of flexible elongate members in the form of thin line portions 51, 52 and 53 ~~may as well be~~ are formed integrally with the sealing lid 4 as in the first embodiment. However, though the rear ends of

two thin line portions 52 and 53 are fixed to the guide tube 6, the other thin line portion 51 is loosely inserted into a guide through groove 6c (or a through hole) provided in an outer side of the guide tube 6, and not so many contracted diameter portions are formed as in the foregoing first embodiment. Also, an engaging step portion 51e is disposed near the rear end of the thin line portion 51 as shown in Fig. 14, and the engaging step portion 51e is to be engaged with the through groove 6c. Thus, when the writing body 2 is retracted, as the engaging step portion 51e is engaged with an engaging step portion 6b disposed near the through groove 6c on the outer face of the guide tube 6, together with the two other thin line portions 52 and 53 it ~~pressed~~ presses backward the sealing lid 4 by the urging of the springy member 7, with the result that the sealing lid 4 and the sealing tube 3 are thereby sealed together.

Paragraph beginning at line 9 of page 19 has been amended as follows:

In the first embodiment, the thin line portion 51 requires sufficient flexibility to allow bending and displacement in the limited space in the writing state, and needs sufficient strength to maintain tension when the sealing lid 4 is in sealed closure. However, depending on the

thickness of the writing body 2, it may be preferable for the thin line ~~portions~~ portion 51 to stay within the shaft tube 1 rather than to be mainly bent and deformed. An example of such a case is the second embodiment. Of course, combined use of the two methods, i.e. bending/deformation and loose insertion into the outer side face of the guide tube 6, is also conceivable.

Paragraph beginning at line 20 of page 19 has been amended as follows:

In this embodiment, in order not to allow the relative back-and-forth motions of the writing body 2 and the shaft tube 1 to be disturbed even ~~in~~ when the rear part of the thin line portion 51 remains within the shaft tube 1 in the writing state, a groove-shaped portion 1p is formed within the shaft tube 1 as shown in Fig. 12 and the rear part of the thin line portion 51 is arranged in the groove-shaped portion 1p, with the result that the back-and-forth motions of the writing body 2 can be accomplished smoothly. Though not shown, a groove which corresponds to the groove-shaped portion may as well be formed on the writing body 2 side, or alternatively the gap between the shaft tube 1 and the writing body 2 may be formed to be sufficiently wide relative to the thickness of the thin line portion 51.

Paragraph beginning at line 14 of page 21 has been amended as follows:

Fig. 20 and Fig. 21 show still another variation of the sliding piece 9, wherein a clip portion 9j is integrally formed with the button portion 9a of the sliding piece 9. An engaging portion 9i is disposed on the clip ball part of ~~that~~ the clip portion 9j, and the tool can be kept in the writing state by engaging that engaging portion 9i with an engaging hole 1h provided in a side of the shaft tube 1 and in the retracted state by engaging it with an engaging hole 1g provided behind the engaging hole 1h. The method of its fitting to the shaft tube 1 is similar to the method illustrated in Fig. 16.